

# Pahponee: Elizabeth, Colorado

*Kickapoo/Potawatomi*

*Potter*



Pahponee has been working with clay since the 1980's. She is a descendent of the Kickapoo and Potawatomi Nations, originally from the the Great Lakes. Her Kickapoo name translates into "Snow Woman". Pahponee is a self taught clay artist who has learned the traditional methods of her Woodland culture as well as contemporary pottery techniques. She spent years experimenting with hand dug and commercial clays and primitive outdoor dung as well as contemporary kiln firing. Mastering pottery techniques has provided the platform for Pahponee to create a dis-

tinctive style of pottery that expresses her own personal style and innovative spirit. She is proud to be reviving pottery making of the Great Lakes region, bring exposure to an art form that has not been prevalent in the past century.

Pahponee's inspiration came from an early life changing experience when she was taken to see White Buffalo mother and her White calf. The White Buffalo is sacred to her Native people and Pahponee began dreaming of the image of White Buffalo coming out of a pot. "The inspiration for each vessel comes from my dreams, visions and personal life experiences. Images of my family, my teachers and animals sacred to me are often the topic for the vessels." The sight of a cloud of baby dragonflies emerging from a pond one afternoon inspired Pahponee's dragonfly pots. "My people came from the Great Lakes; we are water-based peoples and the dragonfly is a water creature. It is Nature's messenger, bringing messages from the Spirit World. They are good omens or a good sign".

Today, Pahponee is one of the top Native American potters. Her most recent honors and awards include Indian Arts And Crafts Association, 1st, 2nd Place—Pottery; Red Earth, Merit Award—Sculpture; Eitlejorg Museum Indian Market, 1st Place—Pottery; Lawrence Indian Arts Show, Merit Award; and Southwest Museum Indian Market, Best of Pottery. Pahponee received 1st Place - Pottery at the Tesoro Cultural Center's 2003 Indian Market, 3rd Place - Pottery at Tesoro's 2004 Indian Market and 2nd Place - Pottery at the Tesoro's 2007 Indian Market. In 2009 Pahponee won 1st Place in Pottery at Tesoro Indian Market.

